

Chapter 6

VISUAL INFORMATION SUPPORT

The support structure and sustaining requirements throughout the deployed theater recognized the need for specific resource intensive visual information operations. This chapter identifies the force structure required, which as of this date has not been approved for implementation. If the concept to implement is not approved by the print date of this publication, commanders and staff should continue to be aware of the necessity to support and “capture the action” whether in support of operational requirements or for the preservation of history.

Section I. Operations and Organization

6-1. Policies

DOD Directive 5040.2 dictates that VI and combat camera (COMCAM) units document the activities of military services. This documentation shall be considered for all theater operational decision making and historical documentation. Neither security classification, OPSEC, nor subject sensitivity should prevent VI operations. VI products can be classified to any level required. OPSEC must be observed when COMCAM assets integrate into theater operations.

6-2. Responsibilities

Commanders operating in a tactical theater are responsible for VI operations and support at the operational through tactical levels of war. All commanders must identify requirements for VI support. Their signal staff will carry out the VI mission to support AirLand Operations. This includes VI operations in all subordinate, assigned, or attached commands. Signal officers and VI staff officers or NCOs assist commanders in conducting these responsibilities. These officers are located at various levels of command. (See Figure 6-1.)

The G3 is responsible for identifying and integrating VI requirements into the command battlefield information efforts. Integrating VI enhances the operational decision-making process when conducting AirLand Operations.

The signal staff officer at each level of command is responsible for directing VI to support the assigned mission. He identifies and evaluates VI requirements and directs the preparation of planned operations, crisis, and exercise plans. The signal staff officer briefs commanders and staff on the capabilities and limitations of COMCAM units and procedures for requesting COMCAM support. The signal staff officer is responsible for defining and integrating the role of VI to support battlefield information systems at his level of command. He will have a VI staff officer or NCO to advise on VI and COMCAM operations.

The VI staff officer or NCO at each level of command is responsible for assisting the signal staff officer in planning and executing VI to support the assigned mission. He identifies and integrates VI applications to support operational decision making

when conducting AirLand Operations. He defines the capabilities and limitations of COMCAM units and sets up procedures for requesting, validating, and prioritizing COMCAM support. The signal staff officer at ECB assumes these duties and responsibilities.

VI support into the operational decision-making process. Users must be familiar with COMCAM capabilities, limitations, and procedures before requesting support. These will be outlined in local VI SOPs.

The functional user at each level is responsible for identifying, defining, coordinating, and integrating

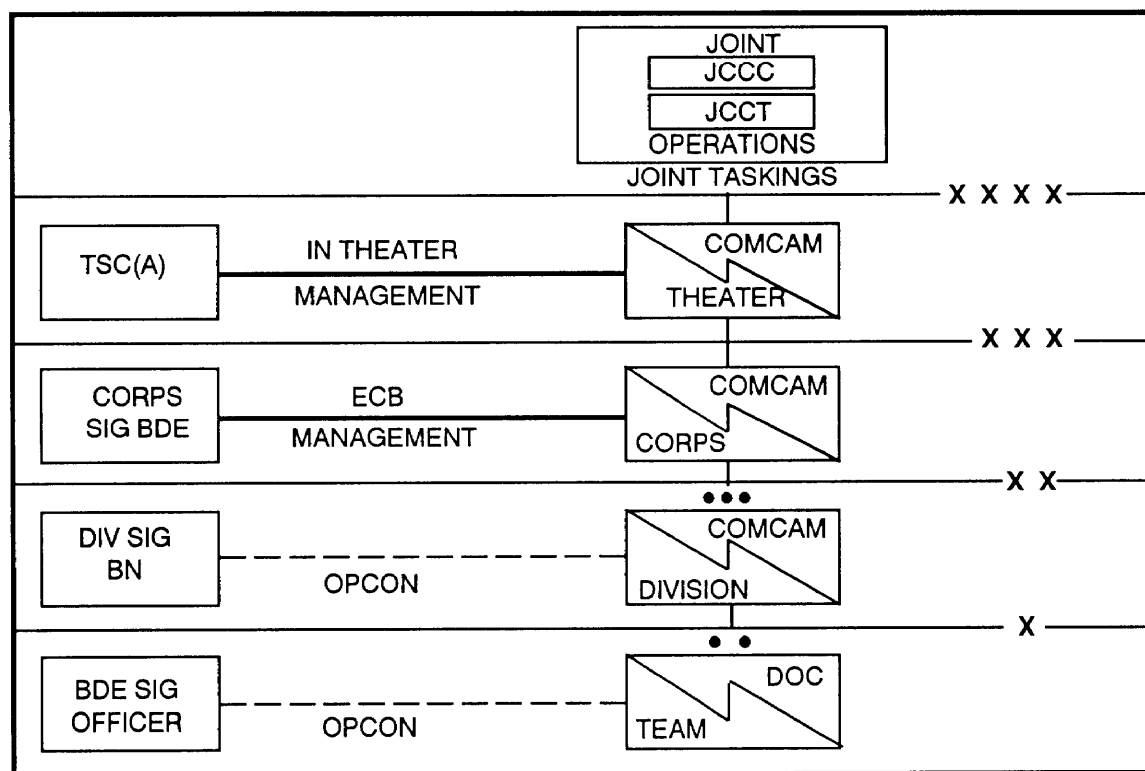


Figure 6-1. Typical Army COMCAM structure.

Section II. Theater

6-3. Responsibilities

Signal VI companies provide VI support to theater headquarters and assigned or attached units above corps for operational decision making and historical documentation. These VI companies are attached to the Theater Signal Command (Army) (TSC(A)) and are organized and equipped by approved TOES. The TSC(A) provides VI and COMCAM resources to satisfy joint COMCAM mission requirements when directed by the joint combat camera team (JCCT).

The theater G3 is the primary staff agency which identifies and prioritizes operational VI requirements for the theater headquarters. These taskings are based on operational needs to support the decision-making process.

The theater signal officer (TSO) receives operational VI taskings from the G3 and other theater staff agencies. He is responsible for integrating VI into battlefield information systems to support planned operations, crisis, and exercise planning. He prioritizes tactical communications systems to ensure near real-time transmission of visual imagery. The TSO ensures VI assets are properly used and sets priorities when the demand for VI support exceeds the capabilities.

The VI officer at the TSC(A) is the main link between the TSO and the theater's organic VI company. He identifies and prioritizes VI assets needed to support operational, crisis, and exercise plans. He advises the TSO on all aspects of the VI and COMCAM mission and suggests the best ways to use assigned VI assets. He sets up policies on the disposition of visual imagery originating within the theater. The VI officer is the point of contact between the TA and the JCCT. He ensures that visual imagery is provided to the JCCT for near real-time transmission to the National Military Command Center (NMCC), joint staff, and headquarter DA. The VI officer is also the main point of contact for COMCAM missions tasked from outside the Army theater.

The VI staff at the TSC(A) manages VI and COMCAM support within the theater. The staff prepares operational annexes to operation plans and tasks COMCAM units to accomplish the VI mission. The VI staff prepares planned operations based on JCS Publication 5-02.1 and crisis operations based on JCS Publication 5-02.4. The VI staff works closely with the TSO and VI officer to identify, coordinate, and execute all other VI taskings.

6-4. Organization

Signal VI companies are organized and equipped by approved TOES. Platoons within those companies are tailored to satisfy tactical VI and COMCAM support requirements for the theater headquarters and assigned or attached units above corps. (See Figure 6-2.)

6-5. Functions

A signal VI company is assigned to the TSC(A). It supports requests for original still and motion media imagery within the theater headquarters area. It also provides support services for images taken by organic VI assets and functional users. These services include processing, editing, duplicating, distributing, and transmitting imagery for the theater headquarters and assigned or attached units above corps. After fulfilling imagery requirements, the VI company forwards camera original images to the JCCT for use by the unified command.

The VI company provides general support maintenance for all organic and functional user VI equipment deployed throughout the theater. It also provides presentation services to the theater headquarters. It consists of a company headquarters, operations and support platoon, and COMCAM platoons.

The company headquarters provides command, control, and coordination of the company's VI and COMCAM missions. This includes administrative, operational, and logistical functions required to accomplish the mission. The company commander performs VI staff officer functions on the TSO's staff.

The operations and support platoon is responsible for coordinating imagery acquisition, processing, editing, duplicating, distributing, and transmission. These support theater and unified command requirements. The platoon coordinates with all functional users (such as PSYOP, MP, and PA) to ensure compatibility with standard acquisition and processing equipment used by the VI company. The platoon catalogs and maintains Army theaterwide duplicate imagery. It reviews imagery for complete captions and technical acceptability to satisfy operational taskings. The platoon provides presentation support

and services to the theater commander and staff. It provides general support maintenance of VI equipment deployed throughout the theater. The platoon consolidates theaterwide VI logistic requirements and processes requirements with the JCCT. The VI liaison NCO in the operations section works full time on the VI staff.

The COMCAM platoons perform imagery acquisition requirements for the theater headquarters and all assigned or attached units above corps. The platoons have tactical wheeled vehicles and are equipped with motion media, conventional still, and digital still video (DSV) camera equipment. They caption all imagery before forwarding it to the operations and support platoon for processing. The operations and support platoon provides transmission support.

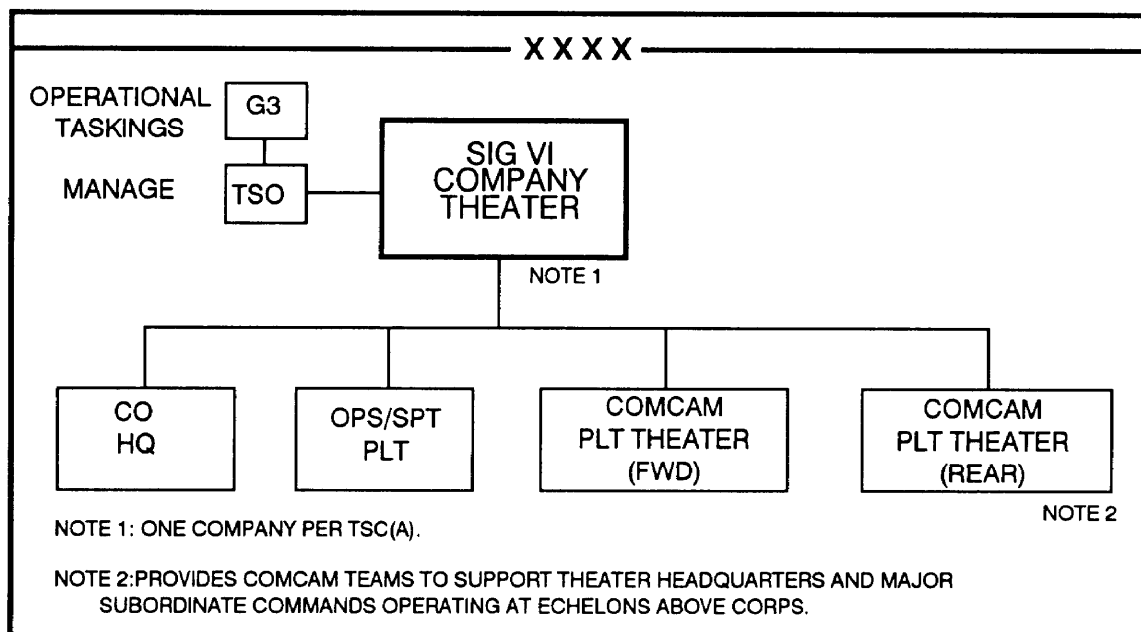


Figure 6-2. COMCAM at theater.

6-6. Equipment and Services

VI equipment. This is commercial off-the-shelf nondevelopmental items (NDI). All organic VI company equipment and functional user acquisition formats must be compatible with VI company processing and transmission capabilities.

Acquisition formats. DOD sets up standards that acquisition formats for COMCAM documentation must follow. This ensures interoperability when operating on a JCCT. Motion media images are recorded on 8mm high band videotape format. Still imagery is recorded using DSV cameras and conventional 35mm single lens reflex (SLR) cameras. VI companies can obtain imagery at night using night vision devices designed to operate with motion media and still imagery equipment. At the theater level, production quality cameras and editing equipment are used for high resolution imagery.

Mobility. VI companies have organic tactical wheeled vehicles to deploy with supported units. These vehicles are configured for self-contained VI processing and editing systems which can operate anywhere on the battlefield.

Processing. The operations and support platoon can process DSV and 35mm slide and negative film. Still imagery is printed using electronic systems which import still imagery from DSV or film. These systems also provide black and white and color prints.

Editing. The operations and support platoon reviews and edits all camera original videotape material. Editing supports operational decision-making requirements outlined by the G3 staff and other theater requirements tasked by the VI staff.

Presentation support. The operations and support platoon can play back videotape and DSV imagery using portable color monitors.

Cataloging. The operations and support platoon reviews and catalogs all camera original imagery before forwarding it to the JCCT. The platoon also duplicates and keeps still and motion media camera original imagery for operational briefings and presentations. The platoon maintains an automated database using the visual information record identification number (VIRIN) system to track and describe all duplicate imagery retained at theater level.

Transmitting. The operations and support platoon is responsible for near real-time transmission of imagery between corps and theater. Camera original imagery is moved using the fastest means available. The primary means of moving imagery between corps and theater are satellites. Secondary means consist of tactical ACUS, microwave, radios, or messenger. The platoon is responsible for coordinating the transmission of imagery to the JCCT at the unified command.

Section III. Corps

6-7. Responsibilities

Signal VI companies provide VI support to corps headquarters and assigned or attached units above division for operational decision making and historical documentation. These VI companies are attached to the corps and are organized and equipped by approved TOEs.

The corps G3 is the primary staff agency which identifies and prioritizes operational VI requirements for the corps headquarters. These taskings are based on operational needs to support the decision-making process.

The CSO receives operational VI taskings from the G3 and other corps staff agencies. He is responsible for integrating VI into battlefield information

systems to support planned operations, crisis, and exercise planning. He prioritizes tactical communications systems to ensure near real-time transmission of visual imagery. The CSO ensures that VI assets are properly used and sets priorities when the demand for COMCAM support exceeds the capabilities.

The VI officer at corps is the main link between the CSO and the corps attached VI company. He identifies and prioritizes VI assets needed to support the corps operational, crisis, and exercise plans. He advises the CSO on all aspects of the VI and COMCAM mission and suggests the best ways to use attached VI assets. He sets up policies on the disposition of visual imagery originating within the corps. The VI officer is the point of contact between the corps and the theater. He ensures that visual imagery is provided to the theater for near real-time transmission to the JCCT at the unified command. The VI officer is also the main point of contact for VI missions tasked from outside the corps.

The VI staff at the corps manages VI support within the corps. The staff prepares annexes to operational plans and tasks VI companies to accomplish the VI mission. The VI staff prepares planned operations, crisis, and exercise plans based on theater guidance. The VI staff works closely with the signal and VI staff officer to identify, coordinate, and execute all other VI tasks.

6-8. Organization

Signal VI companies are organized and equipped by approved TOEs. Platoons within those companies are tailored to satisfy COMCAM and tactical VI support requirements for the corps headquarters and assigned or attached units above division. (See Figure 6-3.)

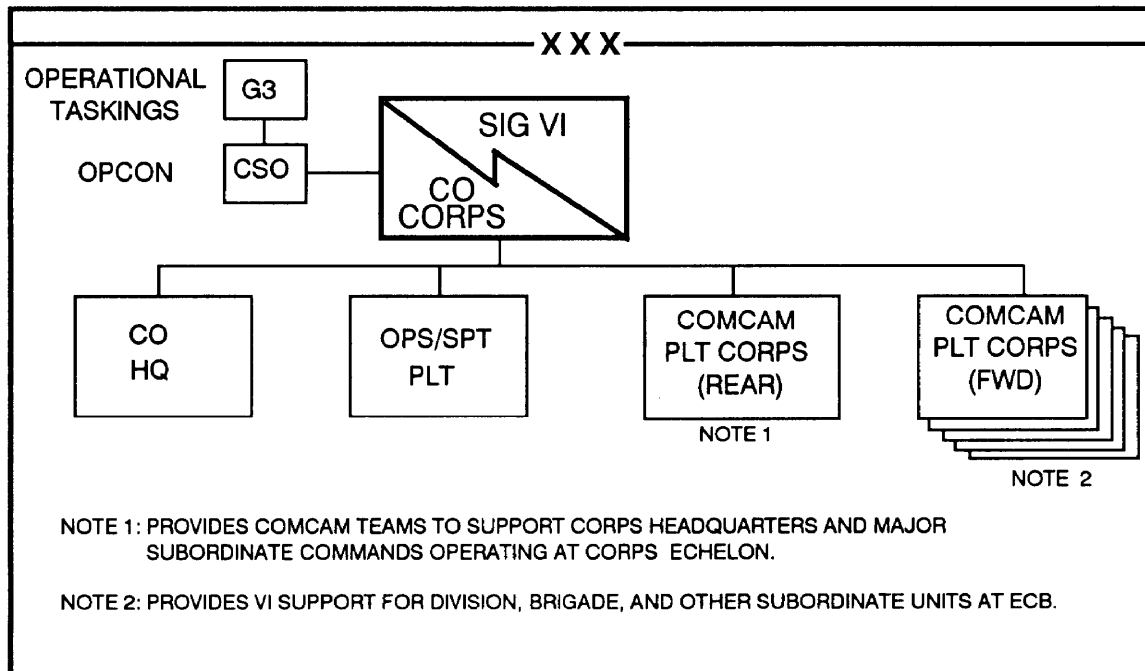


Figure 6-3. COMCAM at corps.

6-9. Functions

A signal VI company is attached to the corps. It supports requests for original still and motion media imagery within the corps headquarters area. It also provides support services for images taken by organic VI assets and functional users. These services include processing, editing, duplicating, distributing, and transmitting imagery for the corps headquarters and assigned or attached units above division. After fulfilling imagery requirements, the signal VI company forwards camera original images to the theater signal VI company for use by the theater headquarters.

The signal VI company provides direct support maintenance for all organic and functional user VI equipment deployed throughout the corps. It also provides presentation services for the corps headquarters. It consists of a company headquarters, operations and support platoon, a COMCAM platoon (rear), and a COMCAM platoon for each division.

The company headquarters provides command, control, and coordination of the company's VI missions. This includes administrative, operational, and logistical functions required to accomplish the mission. The company commander performs VI staff officer functions on the CSO's staff.

The operations and support platoon is responsible for coordinating imagery acquisition, processing, editing, duplicating, distributing, and transmission. These services support corps and theater requirements. The platoon coordinates with all functional users (such as PSYOP, MP, and PA) to ensure compatibility with standard acquisition and processing equipment used by the VI company. The platoon catalogs and maintains Army theaterwide duplicate imagery. It reviews imagery for complete captions and technical acceptability to satisfy operational tastings. The platoon provides presentation support and services to the corps commander and staff. It provides direct support maintenance of VI equipment deployed throughout the corps. The platoon consolidates corpswide VI logistic requirements and processes requirements with the theater signal VI company. The VI liaison NCO in the operations section works on the VI staff.

The COMCAM platoon (rear) performs imagery acquisition requirements for the corps headquarters and all assigned or attached units above corps. The platoon has tactical wheeled vehicles and is equipped with motion media, conventional still, and DSV camera equipment. The platoon caption all imagery before forwarding it to the operations and support platoon for processing. The operations and support platoon provides transmission support.

The COMCAM platoons (forward) provide VI support for division, brigade, and other subordinate units at ECB. These platoons execute imagery acquisition requirements for the division.

6-10. Equipment and Services

VI equipment. This is commercial off-the-shelf NDI. All COMCAM company VI equipment and functional user acquisition formats must be compatible with VI company processing and transmission capabilities.

Acquisition formats. DOD sets up standards that acquisition formats for COMCAM documentation must follow. This ensures interoperability when operating on a JCCT. Motion media images are recorded on 8mm high band videotape format. Still imagery is recorded using DSV cameras and conventional 35mm SLR cameras. VI companies can obtain imagery at night using night vision devices designed to operate with motion media and still imagery equipment.

Mobility. VI companies have organic tactical wheeled vehicles to deploy with supported units. These vehicles are configured for self-contained VI processing and editing systems which can operate anywhere on the battlefield.

Processing. The operations and support platoon can process DSV and 35mm slide and negative film. Still imagery is printed using electronic systems which import still imagery from DSV or film. These systems also provide black and white and color prints.

Editing. The operations and support platoon reviews and edits all camera original videotape material. Editing supports operational decision-making requirements outlined by the G3 staff and other theater requirements tasked by the VI staff.

Presentation support. The operations and support platoon can play back videotape and DSV imagery using portable color monitors.

Cataloging. The operations and support platoon reviews and catalogs all camera original imagery before forwarding it to the JCCT. The platoon duplicates and keeps still and motion media camera original imagery for operational briefings and presentations. It

maintains an automated database using the VIRIN system to track and describe all duplicate imagery retained at corps level.

Transmitting. The operations and support platoon is responsible for near real-time transmission of imagery between division and corps. Camera original imagery is moved using the fastest means available. Satellites are one of the primary means for moving imagery between division and corps. Other means consist of tactical ACUS, microwave, radios, or messenger. The platoon is responsible for coordinating the transmission of imagery to the theater.

Section IV. Division

6-11. Responsibilities

COMCAM platoons provide VI support to division headquarters and are assigned or attached to units above brigade for operational decision making and historical documentation. These COMCAM platoons are attached to the division and are organized and equipped by approved TOEs.

The division G3 is the primary staff agency which identifies and prioritizes operational VI requirements for the division headquarters. These taskings are based on operational needs to support the decision-making process.

The DSO receives operational VI taskings from the G3 and other division staff agencies. He is responsible for integrating VI into battlefield information systems to support planned operations, crisis, and exercise planning. He prioritizes tactical communications systems to ensure near real-time transmission of visual imagery. The DSO

ensures that COMCAM assets are properly used and sets priorities when the demand for COMCAM support exceeds the capabilities.

The VI officer is the main link between the DSO and the attached COMCAM platoon. He identifies and prioritizes COMCAM assets needed to support division operational, crisis, and exercise plans. He advises the DSO on all aspects of the COMCAM mission and suggests the best ways to use attached COMCAM assets. He sets up policies on the disposition of COMCAM imagery originating within the division. The VI officer is the point of contact between the division and the corps. He ensures that COMCAM imagery is provided to the corps for near real-time transmission to the JCCT at the unified command. The VI officer is also the main point of contact for COMCAM missions tasked from outside the division.

The VI staff consists of the COMCAM platoon leader and sergeant. They manage COMCAM support within the division. They prepare operational annexes to operation plans and task COMCAM units to accomplish the VI mission. The staff prepares planned operations, crisis, and exercise plans based on corps guidance. The VI staff works closely with the signal officer and VI officer to identify coordinate, and execute all other VI taskings at the division level.

6-12. Organization

COMCAM platoons are organized and equipped by approved TOES. Sections within those platoons are tailored to satisfy COMCAM and tactical VI support requirements for the division headquarters and assigned or attached units above brigade. The COMCAM section task organizes COMCAM teams to provide imagery acquisition support to the division headquarters and maneuver brigades. (See Figure 6-4).

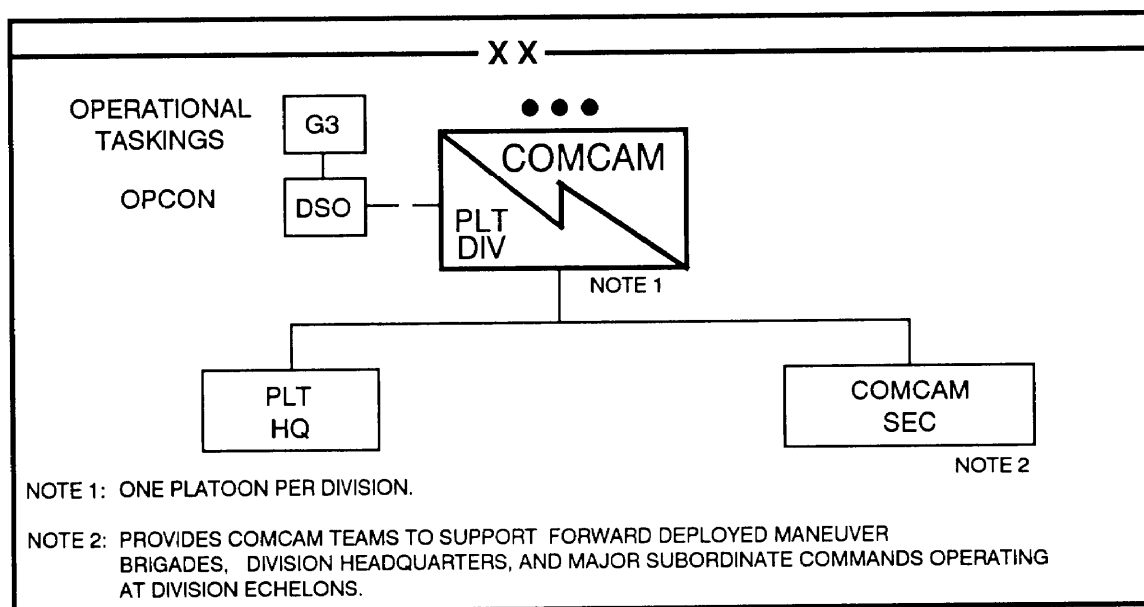


Figure 6-4. COMCAM at division.

6-13. Functions

A COMCAM platoon is attached to the division. It supports requests for original still and motion media imagery throughout the division. These services include DSV processing, videotape editing, duplicating, distributing, and transmitting imagery for the entire division. After fulfilling imagery requirements, the platoon forwards camera original images to the corps signal VI company for use by the corps headquarters.

The COMCAM platoon provides presentation services for the division headquarters. It consists of a platoon headquarters and a COMCAM section.

The platoon headquarters provides command, control, and coordination of the platoon's COMCAM missions. This includes administrative, operational, and logistical functions required to accomplish the mission. The platoon leader and sergeant advise the DSO on all tactical VI issues. They coordinate and execute all imagery acquisition missions and ensure all functional users maintain compatibility with standard acquisition and processing equipment used by the COMCAM platoon.

The COMCAM section performs imagery acquisition requirements for the entire division area. This section task organizes into COMCAM teams to provide support to the division headquarters, rear operations area and maneuver brigades. The COMCAM section has tactical wheeled vehicles and is equipped with motion media, conventional still, and DSV camera equipment. The team captions all imagery before forwarding it to the corps operations and support section for processing. Transmission of DSV is accomplished using portable satellite transceivers or ACUS. Teams can transmit DSV to all command echelons as required.

6-14. Equipment and Services

VI equipment. This is commercial off-the-shelf NDI. All COMCAM platoon VI equipment and functional user acquisition formats must be compatible with COMCAM platoon processing and transmission capabilities.

Acquisition formats. DOD sets up standards that acquisition formats for the COMCAM documentation section must follow. This ensures interoperability when operating on a JCCT. Motion media images are recorded on 8mm high band videotape format. Still imagery is recorded using DSV cameras, conventional 35mm SLR cameras, and self-processing 35mm slide film systems. COMCAM teams can obtain imagery at night using night vision devices designed to operate with media and still imagery equipment.

Mobility. COMCAM teams have organic tactical wheeled vehicles to deploy with supported units. These vehicles are configured for self-contained VI processing and editing systems which can operate anywhere on the battlefield.

Presentation support. COMCAM platoons can play back videotape and DSV imagery using portable color monitors.

Transmitting. The platoon headquarters is responsible for near real-time transmission of imagery between division and corps. Camera original imagery is moved using the fastest means available. Satellites are one of the primary means of moving imagery between division and corps. Other means consist of tactical ACUS, microwave, radios, or messenger. The platoon is responsible for coordinating the transmission of imagery to the theater.

Section V. Brigade and Below

6-15. Responsibilities

COMCAM teams from the division operate at brigade through platoon level as a normal requirement for accomplishing their missions. The BSO operationally controls the COMCAM teams. Team VI support is used for operational decision making and historical documentation. COMCAM teams are task organized and placed at specific locations based on directives from the division G3 or in response to a request by the commander of a divisional unit.

The brigade S3 is the primary staff agency which identifies and prioritizes operational VI requirements for the brigade headquarters. These taskings are based on operational needs to support the decision-making process.

The BSO receives operational VI taskings from the G3 and other brigade staff agencies. He is responsible for integrating VI into battlefield information systems to support planned operations, crisis, and exercise planning. The BSO prioritizes tactical communications systems to ensure near real-time transmission of visual imagery. He ensures that COMCAM assets are supported for quarters, rations, tacked vehicles, and air support when required to accomplish the mission. The BSO sets priorities when the demand for COMCAM assets exceeds the capabilities.

The COMCAM team chief is the main link between the team and the BSO. He executes assigned COMCAM missions and ensures that imagery is transmitted or transported to the division COMCAM platoon in a timely manner. He advises the BSO on all aspects of the COMCAM mission and suggests the best ways to use team assets.

6-16. Organization

COMCAM teams are tasked organized in response to mission taskings to provide flexibility and economy of resources. Team size is normally two to four soldiers. The COMCAM team platoon leader

determines team size, skill, and equipment needs. (See Figure 6-5.)

6-17. Functions

The COMCAM teams execute imagery acquisition requirements for the brigades and below. Teams have tactical wheeled vehicles and are equipped with motion media, conventional still, and DSV camera equipment. The teams caption all imagery before forwarding it to the division's COMCAM platoon headquarters. Transmission of DSV is accomplished using portable satellite transceivers or ACUS. Teams can transmit DSV to all command echelons as required.

6-18. Equipment and Services

VI equipment. This is commercial off-the-shelf NDI. All COMCAM team VI equipment and functional user acquisition formats must be compatible with COMCAM platoon processing and transmission capabilities.

Acquisition formats. DOD sets up standards that acquisition formats for the COMCAM teams must follow. This ensures interoperability when operating on a JCCT. Motion media images are recorded on 8mm high band videotape format. Still imagery is recorded using DSV cameras, conventional 35mm SLR cameras, and self-processing 35mm slide film cameras. COMCAM teams can obtain imagery at night using night vision devices designed to operate with motion media and still imagery equipment.

Mobility. The teams have standard tactical wheeled vehicles to deploy with supported units.

Processing. The teams can process DSV and self-processing 35mm slide film. DSV is printed using a portable color DSV printer.

Transmitting. The teams transmit near real-time DSV imagery to all command echelons as required. Camera original imagery is moved using the fastest means available. Portable satellite transceivers are one

of the primary means of moving DSV. Other means consist of tactical ACUS, microwave, radios, messenger, or organic tactical vehicles.

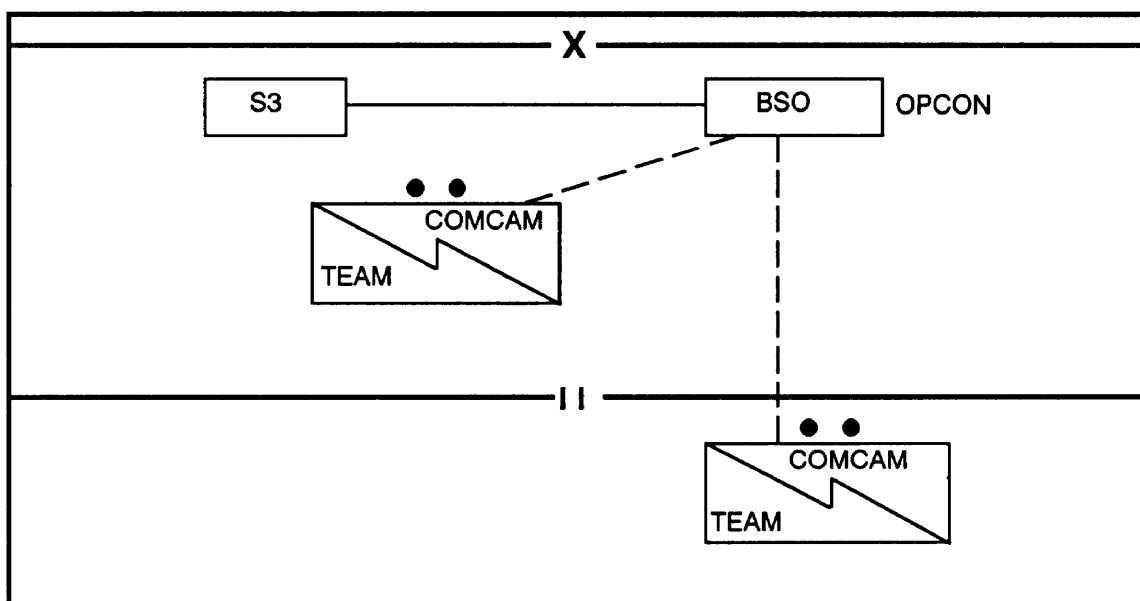


Figure 6-5. COMCAM at brigade and battalion.